

Malvern, PA – On the heels of the 7th Congressional District's Religious/Community Anti-Violence Summit, Congressman Sestak continued to spread his message that government agencies, community and religious organizations can leverage the work they do to better combat violence and its root causes. To that end, he spoke today to the Sisterhood Club of Beth Chaim Reform Congregation in Malvern.

— “I am so pleased to speak with the Sisterhood Club today, and thank President Lois Bryman for welcoming me into her home for this congregational meeting,” said Congressman Sestak. “I was very impressed with the representatives of various faiths who joined me at my Antiviolence Summit this week, and I look forward to continuing this dialogue with members of communities of faith.”

Since taking office, Congressman Sestak makes weekly trips to churches, synagogues, mosques, or other local communities of faith. He makes these weekly stops to talk not only about the values and service exemplified in the lives of congregants, but also to gather their opinions and counsel on issues of utmost importance, particularly violence in our community. These talks resulted in this week's Antiviolence Summit, attended by more than 100 individuals, and the Congressman intends to host a follow-up summit on the topic.

The Congressman often notes the similar approaches the government and religious communities take to address such issues. Both rely on principles of faith, hope, and charity to accomplish their goals. Members of religious institutions like congregation of Beth Chaim rely on their faith in God. Lawmakers, too, rely on faith; a faith in the belief of our democracy and the ideals and values of our country. In addition, hope for peace and goodwill is a guiding tenet in both the government and religious communities. Most importantly religious congregants from all backgrounds are deeply rooted in values of charity. Though not charity, the Congressman sees these same values of helping those most in need in the programs of the federal government. “It is the responsibility of those in government service to ensure the health and welfare of our residents,” Congressman Sestak said. “However, it is the caring, committed and compassionate men and women in our local communities that often truly make a difference in the lives of those in need.”

After his visit to the Sisterhood Club, Congressman Sestak attended the Jewish Federation of Greater Philadelphia's Afternoon of Jewish Learning, in which he participated in a panel discussion with Congressman Jim Gerlach. Congressman Sestak spoke about the importance of Israel to American policy, including economics, technology and the role of Israel as a stabilizing force in the Middle East.

“I was so honored to be part of the Afternoon of Jewish Learning,” said Congressman Sestak. “Over the years, the United States and Israel have developed a close friendship based on common democratic values, religious affinities and security interests, and I was pleased to discuss this relationship today.”

Born and raised in Delaware County, former 3-star Admiral Joe Sestak served in the Navy for 31 years and now serves as the Representative from the 7th District of Pennsylvania. He led a

series of operational commands at sea, including Commander of an aircraft carrier battle group of 30 U.S. and allied ships with over 15,000 sailors and 100 aircraft that conducted operations in Afghanistan and Iraq. After 9/11, Joe was the first Director of "Deep Blue," the Navy's anti-terrorism unit that established strategic and operations policies for the "Global War on Terrorism." He served as President Clinton's Director for Defense Policy at the National Security Council in the White House, and holds a Ph.D. in Political Economy and Government from Harvard University. According to the office of the House Historian, Joe is the highest-ranking former military officer ever elected to the Congress.